

GEF - PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (PIR)

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UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year 2024
Reporting from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

1 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Project Details

GEF ID: 5744	Umoja WBS: GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-005655
SMA IPMR ID: 28965	Grant ID: S1-32GFL-000618
Project Short Title: Bahamas ABS	
Project Title: Strengthening Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) in The Bahamas	
Duration months planned:	36
Duration months age:	94
Project Type:	Medium Sized Project (MSP)
Parent Programme if child project:	
Project Scope:	National
Region:	Latin America and Caribbean
Countries:	Bahamas
GEF Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity
GEF financing amount:	\$ 1,900,000.00
Co-financing amount:	\$ 2,042,292.00
Date of CEO Endorsement/Approval:	2016-02-23
UNEP Project Approval Date:	2015-11-05
Start of Implementation (PCA entering into force):	2016-04-11
Date of Inception Workshop, if available:	2016-06-20
Date of First Disbursement:	2016-05-19
Total disbursement as of 30 June 2024:	\$ 1,796,163.00
Total expenditure as of 30 June:	\$ 1,759,760.00

Midterm undertaken?:	Yes
Actual Mid-Term Date, if taken:	2021-08-14
Expected Mid-Term Date, if not taken:	
Completion Date Planned - Original PCA:	2019-02-01
Completion Date Revised - Current PCA:	2023-12-31
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date:	2024-08-01
Expected Financial Closure Date:	2025-04-30

1.2 Project Description

The project Strengthening Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) in The Bahamas is designed to support the country in the adoption of national measures and mechanisms to meet the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. This is in line with target 16 of the CBD Strategic plan on Biodiversity and the project will not only help the Bahamas in meeting the third objective of the CBD but also the other two objectives. By setting sound ABS procedures and processes, monetary and non-monetary opportunities will trickle down to local and national levels, e.g., through access fees, payments of royalties, joint or shared ownership of intellectual property rights etc.; non-monetary benefits can encompass capacity development, improved recognition of traditional knowledge and use practices, or technology transfer. This will in turn create further incentives for biodiversity conservation that will result from the enhanced understanding of the opportunities that can be leveraged with the effective implementation of the Protocol. Additionally, these mechanisms will support the effective mainstreaming of biodiversity into broader development strategies and action plans at the national level which will create an appropriate environment for advancing broader sustainable development goals.

Component 1: National Strategy on ABS and accession to the Nagoya Protocol

Under Component 1- it is expected that an ABS strategy for The Bahamas is developed in a consultative process. Activities related to education and awareness raising are developed and convened. Briefing sessions with government officials and decision makers are conducted in order to increase the level of understanding on the Nagoya protocol and its specific provisions. But most of all, is the preparation of required documents for ratification / accession process of The Bahamas to the Nagoya protocol. Particularly in analyzing the implication of accession and highlighting the costs and benefits for the Bahamas. This will also develop legislative and regulatory instruments required to give effect to the accession to the Nagoya Protocol through consultation among existing permitting institutions and stakeholders supported and with guidance by the Attorney General's office.

Component 2: National enabling environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol

Sustained conduct of public awareness campaigns primarily on the dissemination of the national ABS framework and related legal and administrative measures in order to communicate the rules governing access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. This component will also highlight the development, passage and

adoption of the ABS legislation. Online provisions related to the administrative procedures for ABS agreements with PIC and MAT shall be made available for use. This is meant to establish an ABS centralized online research permitting portal. The system serves the needs of permit granting authorities in the Bahamas and applicants seeking to access genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources within the jurisdiction of the Bahamas. Improved capacity built within competent national authorities for initiating and negotiating contract agreements in order to ensure a sound regulatory and institutional frameworks to support the successful implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in the Bahamas.

Component 3: Applied ABS arrangements in The Bahamas

This component consists of three (3) pilots namely: #1. To strengthen and maintain partnerships to deal with obligations on ABS agreements related to research permits. Support the establishment of ABS partnerships at the regional level and create an ABS awareness amongst scientific and conservation experts at the national and regional level to support effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. #2. An adjusted partnerships with ex situ collections take up ABS policies in order to apply methodologies developed and knowledge gained, and to find out which ex-situ collections store genetic resources from The Bahamas by tracing back to where respective material was once stored and examined. #3. ABS agreement integrates monitoring system for Biodiversity and sustainable use: this will establish a baseline and develop a population model to monitor the sustainability of harvesting of *Antillogorgia elisabethea* based on current practices, and develop alternative strategies for more sustainable harvesting. Establish and implement a monitoring system with a corresponding adjusted ABS agreement signed by the Government of the Bahamas and the commercial partners, and lastly to convene workshops to bring together partners to negotiate on terms and conditions of the Agreement.

1.3 Project Contacts

Division(s) Implementing the project	Ecosystems Division
Name of co-implementing Agency	
Executing Agency (ies)	Department of Environmental Planning and Protection
names of Other Project Partners	Law Office of Pericles Maillis, GermanCooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH), University of the Bahamas, Government of The Bahamas namely: Attorney General’s Office, the Customs Department, Department of Agriculture, Department of Marine Resources, Bahamas National Trust, Forestry Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Antiquities Monuments Museum Corporation
UNEP Portfolio Manager(s)	Johan Robinson
UNEP Task Manager(s)	Christopher Cox
UNEP Budget/Finance Officer	George Saddimbah
UNEP Support Assistants	Glortizel Frangakis
Manager/Representative	Rhianna Neely - Murphy

Project Manager	Ma Cecilia B. Colarina
Finance Manager	Shenik Thompson
Communications Lead, if relevant	

2 Overview of Project Status

2.1 UNEP PoW & UN

UNEP Current Subprogramme(s):	Thematic: Nature action subprogramme
UNEP previous Subprogramme(s):	Healthy and productive ecosystems
PoW Indicator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature: (iii) Number of countries and national, regional and subnational authorities and entities that incorporate, with UNEP support, biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches into development and sectoral plans, policies and processes for the sustainable management and/or restoration of terrestrial, freshwater and marine areas
UNSDCF/UNDAF linkages	2022-2026 UN MSDF in the Caribbean includes Outcome 6 'Caribbean countries manage natural resources & ecosystems strengthening their resilience & enhancing the resilience& prosperity of the people and communities that depend on them' which is relevant to the objectives under this project
Link to relevant SDG Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Link to relevant SDG Targets:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed

2.2. GEF Core and Sub Indicators

GEF core or sub indicators targeted by the project as defined at CEO Endorsement/Approval, as well as results

Indicators	Targets - Expected Value			Materialized to date
	Mid-term	End-of-project	Total Target	
	(NULL)			

Implementation Status 2023: Final PIR

2.3. Implementation Status and Risks

	PIR#	Rating towards outcomes (section 3.1)	Rating towards outputs (section 3.2)	Risk rating (section 4.2)
FY 2024	Final PIR	S	HS	L
FY 2023	7th PIR	S	HS	L

FY 2022	6th PIR	S	S	L
FY 2021	5th PIR	S	S	M
FY 2020	4th PIR	MS	MS	M
FY 2019	3rd PIR	U	U	S
FY 2018	2nd PIR	HU	HU	S
FY 2017	1st PIR	U	U	Unknown
FY 2016				
FY 2015				

Summary of status

The “Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) project in The Bahamas” was concluded at the end of October 2023, representing a significant achievement for the government and people of The Bahama that was executed through close partnership and active collaboration. The rather non-committed stance to ABS matters that had been previously characteristic of the national agencies at the start of the project was replaced by more pro-active and receptive stakeholders, and government on a whole.

1. Under Component 1: National Strategy on ABS and Accession to the Nagoya Protocol - the project was able to successfully develop a national ABS strategy and national policy framework that paved the way for the passage of a landmark legislation in The Bahamas known as the " Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Protection and Sustainable Use Act" or better known as the ABS Act of 2021. The Bahamas is the first country in the Caribbean Region to have passed this enabling ABS legislation. The crafting and the final enactment of the ABS Act came from the concerted and collective effort of various stakeholders like The Office of the Attorney General, University of The Bahamas, the private office of Atty. Pericles Maillis , Atty. Olivier Rukundo, and the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection (DEPP). The passage of the ABS Act of 2021, paved the way to finally achieve the long aspiration of The Bahamas to ratify and accede to the Nagoya Protocol. A year after the ABS Act was passed (March 2021), The Bahamas was acceded to the Nagoya Protocol. Prior to the accession, awareness and outreach materials on the Nagoya Protocol was developed and widely disseminated. Three (3) sets of workshops and briefing sessions were delivered to members of the Parliament, key government officials and decision makers, targeting a total of 78 participants, to raise the level of understanding on the Nagoya Protocol and its specific provisions.

2. Under Component 2: National enabling environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol - This was achieved through the adoption of the national ABS legal framework where a dynamic coordination mechanism was developed. Communication trainings were conducted, and educational materials and public service announcements were developed that focused on informing researchers, local communities and industries of the adoption of a national law on ABS, as well as particular provisions including PIC requirements, the negotiation of ABS agreements, and other relevant provisions of the Nagoya Protocol. Over the project a total of 620 participants were involved. The coordination mechanism established out of ABS framework strengthened the institutional capacity of the research institutions to fully prepare themselves for the establishment of a single research pathway for the Bahamas. On April 1, 2021, the ABS online research permitting portal was launched. The

operation and maintenance of sustained functionality of the portal is already mainstreamed /institutionalized within the general programme of The Bahamas government by allocating funds and designating trained personnels to manage the research portal.

3. Under Component 3: Applied ABS arrangements in The Bahamas: This heightened the partnership between Bahamian academic institutions and commercial users and Ex Situ Collectors which paved the way to apply the ABS agreements with Bahamian authorities by accomplishing what was expected in the three (3) required Pilots namely: 1. the development of the population model; 2. the conduct of the validation analysis; and 3. the formulation of the management plan. These pilots created an enabling environment supporting the conclusion of the ABS agreements beyond the project life. Contract trainings were done in 2 batches; the first batch, between the members of the ABS project steering committee and the 2nd batch for selected members of the parliament with a total number of participants of 48.

2.4 Co Finance

Planned Co-finance:	\$ 2,042,292
Actual to date:	2,728,895
Progress	<p>Justify progress in terms of materialization of expected co-finance. State any relevant challenges:</p> <p>The partner's committed co financing target of \$2,042,292 was exceeded; \$2,728,895.80 or equivalent to 133%.</p> <p>The government will continue to support the work of the project beyond completion, given the statutory role it plays in the onward governance of the ABS framework. Governmental contributions to the project over its duration were as follows:</p> <p>Administrative and support staff \$400,000</p>

Office premises (2023) - \$120,000
Staff travel and miscellaneous expenses - \$100,000
Communication and dissemination (2022 – 2023) - \$50,000
Payment of Staff comprising the research team (2021 – 2022) - \$324,000
TOTAL - \$994,000.00

2.5. Stakeholder

Date of project steering committee meeting	2023-10-12
Stakeholder engagement (will be uploaded to GEF Portal)	<p>The project is now technically closed. Moving forward the stakeholder engagement (response and redress) mechanism has transitioned institutionally to DEPP that administers the ABS application portal, with guidance from the technical teams as outlined below. The DEPP will continue stakeholder engagement through its institutional mandate.</p> <p>The existing ABS Project Steering Committee (PSC) as mandated by the ABS Act of 2021, is continuously being functional and serve as panel of advisers for various consultations related to the administration and operationalization of the ABS online reaserch permitting portal and more so, the enforcement of the ABS Act particularly pertaining to some issues about commercial and non-commercial MAT (Mutually Agreed Terms) and PIC (Prior Informed Consent)</p> <p>The Legal Team – The role of the legal team is to ensure the timely formulation and passage of the ABS Act serving as consultative avenue to address different issues that came out with respect to the enforcement of the ABS Act, more specifically in the dealing with users and permit application related to the ABS portal. This team is comprised of Lawyers from the University of The Bahamas (UB), Office of the Attorney General (AOG), and the DEPP being the Chair of the committee.</p> <p>Research Permitting Team – The online research permitting portal is being managed by a team of selected environmental officers of the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection (DEPP). This team is formed out of the need to put a system in place considering that DEPP is the administrator of the ABS portal. The application process still lawfully recognizes each mandate of every permitting authority. It avoided the situation of overlaps and bypassing of respective mandates. The Research permitting authorities who form this team are the Department of Agriculture (DoA), Department of Marine Resources (DMR), Bahamas National Trust (BNT), Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Corporation (AMMC), Forestry Unit, and the DEPP. Every permitting authority has a designated of well-trained Desk Officers who also manage the system.</p>

	<p>Law Enforcement Team – This team is already embedded as a committee as mandated by the ABS Act of 2021. The Royal Bahamas Defense Force (RBDF) continues to be the lead agency for this team and joined by the Customs Bureau, Ministry of Immigration, The Nature Conservancy, Bahamas Police Force, Ministry of Marine Resources, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General, with the DEPP as the Co-convenor of the RBDF.</p> <p>Partnership with 3 Collaborating Institutions:</p> <p>Perry Institute for Marine Science (PIMS) – The PIMS was responsible for delivery of expected outputs under Component 3 – Pilot 1. 1. Development of a population model; 2. Development of the management plan; and 3. The conduct of validation analysis. All these will contribute to establishing a monitoring system that combines ABS and Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The engagement of PIMS in the partnership will continue in providing guidance to the ABS Committee in relation to the operationalization of the portal as well as through the dissemination of information pertaining to the guidelines of the portal to other research institutions outside The Bahamas.</p> <p>University of The Bahamas (UB) – UB developed the PIC and MAT Templates, and addressed IPR issues for key officials of the government. The UB remains well represented in the ABS Committee as well as in the Legal Team as mandated by the ABS Act, 2021.</p> <p>Antiquities Monuments and Museums Corporation (AMMC) –The AMMC facilitated the implementation of Pilot 2 activities in undertaking a study that will provide an overview of Bahamian resources held in ex situ collection and analysis of existing ABS policies of ex- situ collections; and later on, the conduct of partnership dialogues with selected ex-situ collections to discuss ABS policy for new utilizations of Bahamian genetic resources. The partnership with AMMC will continue given that they are an ABS permitting authority.</p>
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2.6. Gender

Does the project have a gender action plan?	No
Gender mainstreaming (will be uploaded to GEF Portal):	<p>The entire course of the ABS project implementation was strongly influenced by female leadership in the legal team, research permitting team and the law enforcement network wherein the lead agency which is the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF). The gender dimension is well integrated into the various implementation aspects of the ABS project. It is noteworthy that a large number of women (81% or 17/21 – female-nominated focal persons) were part of the project steering committee. This large proportion of women in the project are holding vital government positions and exercising mandates that brought significant influence in the decision-making processes on behalf of their respective institutions. The legal team, led by the Office of the Attorney General were a group of women lawyers who until now have been supporting the ABS framework in carrying out the provisions of the ABS Act, 2021. The ABS Research Team is all-women; technical and environmental officers of DEPP who are designated for the purpose of facilitating and filtering research application coming from local and international applicants.</p> <p>The ABS Committee as mandated by the ABS Act of 2021 is also well represented by women. They are officially designated focal persons by their respective institution’s head of office or department. The gender distribution of the committee members from among the 16 agencies is Female – 13 (81.25%) and Male – 3 (18.75%). These female leaders have ensured that the gender aspects are mainstreamed in various ABS related initiatives as manifested in the provisions of the legislation that clearly emphasized gender importance and inclusivity.</p> <p>During the early stages of the ABS project, the importance of gender mainstreaming and beneficiary uptake was not sufficiently translated to the community level. But through consultations and informal sessions with the local administrators, the project incorporated community women in the work of the project, who are considered healers and advocates of the bush medicines and therefore have a critical role in the ABS framework in respect to being custodians of traditional knowledge over use of genetic resources. Almost all of the family islands of The Bahamas have well-recognized women healers that are patronized by large segments of the community. These women are precursors in the protection and conservation of endemic genetic resources through the safeguarding of Traditional Knowledge (TK) in use and application in The Bahamas. The DEPP that now maintains the statutory authority for management of the ABS framework in the country post-project will continue to foster engagement of traditional healers and affiliated small enterprises that utilize local genetic resources toward assurance that TK benefits are safeguarded. It is expected that over time the system will be enhanced based on experience in administering the framework so that these stakeholders remain well represented and that gender equity is fostered.</p>

2.7. ESSM

<p>Moderate/High risk projects (in terms of Environmental and social safeguards)</p>	<p>Was the project classified as moderate/high risk CEO Endorsement/Approval Stage? Yes If yes, what specific safeguard risks were identified in the SRIF/ESERN? The project will establish an M&E platform to measure environmental and social impacts</p>
<p>New social and/or environmental risks</p>	<p>Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during the reporting period? Yes If yes, describe the new risks or changes? various delays and adjustments as attributed to the COVID Pandemic. However, significant targets were achieved despite critical period.</p>
<p>Complaints and grievances related to social and/or environmental impacts</p>	<p>Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential) during the reporting period? Yes If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail, including the status, significance, who was involved and what actions were taken? A key grievance among stakeholders was associated with the establishment of the ABS centralized online research permitting portal. These stakeholder entities were initially concerned over the possibility that the new system will have been unduly onerous and costly, not facilitating what may be dynamic demands to obtaining research permits. In the past, permits were issued with no or minimal review/due process, and without cost. The new procedure introduced due process that subjected applications to scrutiny in a harmonized review and approval framework that was also subject to a pricing scheme based on the nature of the application. In this new permitting system, applicants are required to register and verify the legality of their institution as well as of the person or individual applicant. By virtue of the ABS Act of 2021 which legally supports the operationalization of the ABS portal, both local and international applicants gradually learned to adapt to the system following the appropriate application protocols and procedures. The ABS portal is a continuing work in progress with various innovations and enhancements to the system that makes it more user friendly. The formation of the DEPP research team as well as the designation of Desk Officers in each of the permitting agencies or authorities facilitated an organized and centralized pathway in terms permit application process.</p>

Environmental and social safeguards management	<p>The ratification (December 31, 2021) and coming into force (March 30, 2022) of The Bahamas to the Nagoya Protocol was a significant breakthrough following the passage of the ABS Act of 2021 as well as the full operationalization of the ABS centralized online permitting portal. The accession of The Bahamas to the Nagoya Protocol will ensure the equitable access and benefit-sharing of the country's genetic resources as part of the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol. The newly elected government leaders at the time requested for a Cabinet briefing that was held on March 27, 2022 in order to consider the relevance of access and benefit sharing in a national agenda, to ensure that the benefits of research and commercial applications of genetic resources sourced from the country will result in benefits that will filter down to beneficiary communities who are charged with responsibility of conservation and who are the bearers of traditional knowledge. The ABS project had been maintaining its commitment to further ensure that environmental and social safeguards are being met as contained in the project design and through its delivery of outputs toward the desired result areas. The project has established a wide consultative network to solicit stakeholder inputs across all levels of the project. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) contributed to sustaining awareness to educate the general public and target commercial sectors, in addition to senior policy makers about the work of the project and its intended benefits to the Bahamas. Despite government's priorities in surpassing the challenges brought by the global pandemic, the government of The Bahamas remains committed in realizing compliance with the committed environmental and social safeguards. In summary, the social and environmental safeguards assurance post-project are being transitioned to the statutory authority of the DEPP that will be administering the ASB mechanism in the country under the technical and policy support of the ABS Committee that has been formalized to assure the implementation of the provisions of the ABS Act. Part of the mechanism will be the continued close engagement of the stakeholders and beneficiaries through educational and outreach efforts and maintenance of a channel for communications that is affected through the permitting application process. It is expected that over time the mechanism will evolve to fully address challenges that have been encountered during the project-phase institution of the ABS mechanism.</p>
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2.8. KM/Learning

Knowledge activities and products	<p>The following are the key documents that formed the basis of knowledge management and dissemination:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ABS Policy Statement Framework: This policy was developed by the University of the Bahamas and had a wide consultative process between September 2019 until 30 June 2021 2. Prototype – ABS Permitting Manual: This manual was developed by Dr. Paul Oldham and training delivered to the permitting agencies including the desk Officer's Training, The Administrator Module (https://bahamasadmin.amband.co.ke/); dashboard training for permitting authorities; and the actual hands-on training on the actual operationalization of the portal.
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Legal and Administrative Mandates for an Online Permitting System: An overview of the institutions that provide research permits along with their relevance to ABS and legal mandates, to support the operation of an online research permitting system, recommendations are provided for changes to the current research permitting process and considerations that were included in the crafting of the ABS legislation. 4. Legislative and Institutional Modalities and options for seeking PIC and MAT: This includes the legislative/institutional modalities and options for seeking prior informed consent (PIC) with local communities in order to provide a basis for the implementation of legal components of the project. 5. Management Plan for A. Elisabethae and Final Model Validation Analysis Report: it aims to provide science-based recommendations to assist marine resource managers with sustainably managing the A. elisabethae fishery within The Bahamas. Promote and encourage research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity 6. Baseline Knowledge Attitude Practices (KAP) Survey report and Endline KAP Survey Report: A KAP survey to assess the general implementation of the ABS project. The study also assisted in identifying knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs, or behavioral patterns that facilitated understanding and action, and assessed the communication and awareness processes and sources. 7. ABS PIC and MAT presentation and workshop report: To support compliance, Parties are obliged to take measures to monitor the utilization of genetic resources, including through the designation of checkpoints and reporting requirements. As evidence that genetic resources have been accessed in accordance with PIC and that MAT have been established, a permit or its equivalent has to be granted by the provider country at the time of access. 8. ABS Contract Training Course - The training course was designed to be practical and specific to the needs of The Bahamas and national stakeholders who could be or are already involved in negotiations for ABS contracts 9. Accession Manual - This is used in order to educate the members of the parliament on the core obligations of the Nagoya Protocol and the model instrument for accession. 10. ABS Act of 2021 - This is The Bahamas national ABS legal framework: "The Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Protection and Sustainable Use Act" 11. Presentation on Contract Training - This is a step-by-step guide to a functional benefit-sharing obligation in order to reduce the ambiguity to an absolute minimum and formulate the contract with externally verifiable criteria. 12. Benchmark Analysis: Overview of national/ regional ABS measures - This provides an overview of the content of ABS measures adopted by some countries in recent years. While the analysis primarily focuses on countries that adopted measures after the adoption and entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, a few pre- Nagoya protocol country measures are featured as these also provide useful and valid information on approaches and options that country can choose in designing and implementing ABS systems.
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	<p>13. ABS online research permitting portal https://www.depp.gov.bs/research-permits/</p> <p>14. PSA for the permitting portal – access through the website or YouTube https://youtu.be/Ux5uNDZg_aE</p>
Main learning during the period	<p>A main lesson was the process for institutionalization of the ABS project as a general program of the national government through the DEPP and by extension the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources. This process is still at an early stage. In anticipation of project closure in December 2023, the DEPP prepared a strategy on how to sustain key initiatives. A year before the project closure, the DEPP established a team to process permits and later formalized the team into a unit in the DEPP where they are now tagged as the DEPP research Team. This unit is comprised of Environmental Officers (currently all-women) who are staff of the government. These environmental Officers are hired and paid by the government to continue with the management, administration and operationalization of the ABS established online research permitting portal. Each research institution that has a mandate of issuing research permits, is equipped with a computer system and internet connection with officially designated Desk Officers who are in charge of the processing of research applications for coordination and approval by the DEPP. All these processes are now being maintained and paid by the government. Overall the project is gradually transitioning to the general ABS program of the government as manifested by their commitment to sustain what the project had established. This is a positive sign that they are true to their commitment of mainstreaming the ABS system as part of their national initiatives.</p>

2.9. Stories

Stories to be shared	<p>From the successful implementation of the ABS project in The Bahamas along with the remarkable results it has achieved, the emerging good practices and success stories are being translated in an effort to inspire and assist other countries of the Caribbean Region who are implementing the ABS project. To wit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) who implemented the project “Advancing the Nagoya Protocol in Countries of The Caribbean Region” (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St, Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago) – Sharing on the success of The Bahamas in the crafting and passage of a national legal instrument on ABS. The processes, strategies and how it was pursued and got approved, and considering that The Bahamas is the first country in the Caribbean Region to pass an enabling ABS legislation. •The establishment of the ABS centralized online research permitting portal – The Bahamas is also considered as one among the few countries in the
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world who has a functional ABS online research permitting system. Majority of the countries in The Caribbean Region are decisive to pursue similar initiative onward the establishment of their own research portal. Culling out the lessons learned from the ABS experience in The Bahamas.

- Recognition of the CARICOM (Caribbean Community and Common Market) on the successful implementation of the ABS project in The Bahamas – attesting that what the ABS Bahamas accomplished should be replicate in the other countries of the Caribbean Region.
- Invitation from different countries of the Caribbean Region to share the success of The Bahamas ABS – organized through the IUCN.
- Sharing of ABS useful materials – that can assist other countries in the crafting of an ABS policy as well as the establishment of a single pathway onward the establishment of a centralized research permitting system.
- An approach and strategies in keeping a functional ABS project steering committee, an active stakeholder engagement and a committed government.

The foregoing represents the basis for lessons learned transfer and replication to other SIDS in the Caribbean and at the global level.

SHARING THE WEALTH FROM NATURE WITH THE CUSTODIANS OF NATURE: (9 July 2024)

A case study from The Bahamas on enhancing Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) through the sustainable use of marine resources under the Nagoya Protocol

Department of Environmental Planning and Protection (DEPP)

Ministry of The Environment and Natural Resources

Nassau, The Bahamas

The Bahamas is an archipelago with over 700 islands, comprising numerous islets and cays, sprawling over some 199,553 square kilometers of land and sea space in the western Atlantic Ocean. On account of its vast sea space, most of the country's biological diversity is contained within its coastal and deep-water biomes, the vast portion of which remains unexplored.

The ocean and its vibrant ecosystems are as much a part of the productive assets of The Bahamas as those of the land, which is at the cultural core of the country, and is vital to its economic development. Among the ecosystems of highest importance are the coral reefs. Coral Reefs cover 35% of the sea floor of the Caribbean generally to a depth of 25-30 meters. These reef systems harbor the greatest diversity and abundance of life in The Bahamas.

Dr. Craig Dahlgren, Executive Director of the Perry Institute for Marine Science (PIMS) notes “Coral reefs support the thriving tourism industry of the country, harbors important fishery resources that feed the nation and also protects the fragile coastal zones within which the settlement and commercial centers, along with the tourism assets are concentrated. The Bahamas has more coral reef area than any other nation in the Caribbean region and boasts one of the world’s largest contiguous coral reefs, the Andros Barrier Reef.

As with coral reefs across the globe, Bahamian reef ecosystems are threatened by larger-scale climate change impacts that are manifested through ocean acidification and increasing ocean temperatures. At the regional and local levels, coral reefs are under pressure from inappropriate coastal development, pollution and unsustainable fishing practices, along with impacts from invasive species that contribute to species declines, and lost biodiversity resiliency. Additionally, the overall health of coral reefs systems are compromised by human-induced effects which create opportunities for the spread of diseases that not only impact the corals themselves but has a knock-on effect for other dependent ecosystems.

The rich marine biodiversity of The Bahamas is of great economic value. Notwithstanding, its value for food and for tourism, certain species found in the country’s coastal waters have been recognized to have significant commercial value to the medical and pharmaceutical industries. For decades the waters of The Bahamas, have been subjected to bioprospecting by researchers and scientist in search of useful extracts which could yield commercial benefits. One successful find was the species *Antillogorgia elisabethae*, a type of soft coral belonging to the Gorgoniidae family. The coral is found in Caribbean waters generally between depths of 25 to 30 meters, often where there are reef drop-offs. It is commonly known as ‘sea whip’ on account of its feathery structure. The extract from the sea whip is known to comprise a powerful healing ingredient which has been found to neutralize enzymes that are responsible for skin irritation. The chemical properties are proven to be effective in the treatment of skin sensitivity due to sunburn, aging, and in the treatment of pain and swelling from acne. These neutralizing properties combined with anti-inflammatory and healing capabilities make it a highly sought-after ingredient in skin treatment formulations.

Without a legal framework that would enable fair and equitable sharing of benefits from derived commercial applications, The Bahamas was unable to explore the full opportunities which a discovery such as that of the *Antillogorgia elisabethae* could bring. The country also has the challenge of monitoring and controlling access to its resources given the vast expanse of its territorial waters. However, The Bahamas remains particularly attractive to researchers given the extent and diversity of its coastal ecosystems and its proximity to major scientific institutions in North America. In November 2019, against the backdrop of numerous applications for access to its biological resources, and the work of the project to develop an enabling ABS regulatory

framework, the Government of The Bahamas was compelled to put in place an 18-month moratorium on the export of all biological resources from the country. The initial 18 months was identified as a timeline to address the legal gaps. However, with the global pandemic of Covid-19 there was a delay in implementation of the legislation and installation of a comprehensive permitting system

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to which The Bahamas is a party, is an international body through which countries advance national commitments to protect and sustainably manage their biodiversity, for both national and global benefits. The CBD Convention includes the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. The Nagoya Protocol is a tool which can help local communities, that are custodians of biological resources, gain access to and benefit from shared (ABS) direct use of those resources, or the use of traditional knowledge held by these communities.

In response to the increasing demands on the Government of The Bahamas for access to the country's biological resources and recognizing the need to strengthen the weak national regulatory environment, to assure access and benefit sharing (ABS), The Bahamas, with support from the Global Environment Facility, partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to develop and implement a project titled "Strengthening Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) in The Bahamas". The project sought to develop a national policy and strategy program to facilitate the accession to the Nagoya Protocol; the creation of national enabling legislation and the creation of the required regulatory environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, and the development of a pilot program aimed at identifying a sustainable managing strategy to harvest *Antillogorgia elisabethae*. The pilot program would develop a monitoring system which would inform the ABS agreements on extraction of the species and lay out a protocol for agreements to follow.

Mr. Pericles Maillis a long-time environmental activist and Bahamian lawyer noted that "The People of the earth must learn, live and open themselves with full knowledge of the value of every life form, and the tragedy of extinction of species. Each extinction known and unknown deprives earth and humans of both the ecosystem functions of lost lifeforms but also the yet unknown medical lifesaving or other derivative values being lost forever.

A major thread throughout the ABS project was to build awareness among decision makers and relevant stakeholders on opportunities for accession to the Nagoya Protocol and develop various procedures and frameworks which will support a transparent management system. On February 18th, 2021 the Parliament of The Bahamas passed the Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Conservation and Sustainable Use Act. The Act will come into force on March 24th, 2021. This ABS Act of 2021 will brought into force clear institutional frameworks and procedures. It also put in place a transparent administrative procedure for formulating ABS agreements between users and the Government of The Bahamas. The ABS agreements was established through mechanisms such as prior informed consent (PIC) and the mutually agreed terms (MAT). The Act also called for the establishment of an information system for the management of research/bioprospecting permit applications. This is a major milestone not only for The Bahamas but for the Caribbean as the country will be the first in the region to have passed an ABS-enabling legislation. The passage of the legislation paved the way for the

country to be acceded to the Nagoya Protocol on March 30, 2022.

Minister of Environment and Housing, Hon. Romuald Ferreira said “The ABS Act is one of the most important pieces of legislation passed in the house to govern our natural resources, particularly the marine environment of The Bahamas, wherein the marine biodiversity of this country is of great value. Besides the value for food and tourism, in terms of recreational use, certain species have been recognized to have value to the medical and pharmaceutical industry. The Bahamas is now posed to participate on equal footing with 21st century discoveries, and this is indeed an achievement”.

One major objective of the project was the need to build capacity for negotiating and tracking compliance with the agreements. Thus, the project was crafted to include the provision that public and private sector legal experts would work along with the technical legal experts from the German Technical Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH) and technical regulatory agencies would work with the Perry Institute of Marine Science to understand the science behind the first marine discovery and its potential as a sustainable commercialize product. The various project partnerships ensured that the results gained from the project will lead to lessons learned and information already produced can be utilized to the maximum extent possible and that new approaches and experiences in The Bahamas can be shared within the region and beyond.

“While it is important to have laws or agreements in place, it is far more important to be able to manage and enforce the conditions of those legal requirements or agreements” said DEPP Director, Mrs. Rochelle Newbold

The successful outcome of the ABS project was achieved due to close collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders, led by the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection (DEPP). Key project partners included the University of The Bahamas, the Attorney General’s Office, the Customs Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Marine Resources, the Bahamas National Trust, the Forestry Unit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Bahamas Defense Force and the Bahamas Antiquities Monuments Museum Corporation.

The completion of the project will make a significant contribution to meeting Goal 15 of the Sustainable development Goals, specifically Target 15.6 ‘Equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources and Target 15.9 ‘By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts’.

“With the passage of the Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Protection and Sustainable Use Act by parliament in February 2021, progress to meeting all other targets are well in hand” said Project Manager Ms. Cecille Colarina.

3 Performance

3.1 Rating of progress towards achieving the project outcomes

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
To create and apply the enabling conditions for fair and equitable access and effective benefit sharing	Draft National ABS strategy, draft law, implementing legislation and institutional frameworks in place which will enable the Bahamas to accede to the Nagoya Protocol and to effectively implement its provisions.	No comprehensive ABS strategy, laws or institutional framework in place	No comprehensive ABS strategy, laws or institutional framework in place	All necessary ABS accession documents are drafted, reviewed, validated through a national consultative process A draft national law and corresponding regulations are elaborated and one or more institutions is officially designated and capacitated to fulfill the functions and	100%	The Bahamas initiated the following steps accordingly onward the country's accession to the Nagoya protocol namely: 1.) Submission and approval of a Cabinet paper; 2.) Ministry of The Environment endorsement of the accession documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and; 3.) Ministry of Foreign Affairs completion of the accession documents and submission to the UN headquarters. Finally, The Bahamas ratified to the Nagoya protocol dated December 30, 2021 and came into force on March 30, 2022. The Ministry of the Environment and Natural resources was designated as the Competent National Authority (CAN) and designating the Department of Environmental Planning and protection as the National Focal Point by virtue of the ABS Act, 2021 under Part II re: "Administration of the Act" The ABS Act 2021, was legislated not to impede research but to ensure that research is conducted in a structured	HS

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period(numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
				responsibilities of a National Competent Authority. fill		and regulated manner. The structure and main obligations of the ABS Act provided the condition for collecting and sampling genetic resources and materials.	
1.1: National Strategy and Accession to the Nagoya Protocol support mainstreaming of ABS into environmental policy	Existence of a comprehensive ABS strategy developed through a consultative process involving all relevant actors and stakeholders	None	All relevant documents (including analysis of implication for accession and other legal documents) needed for accession are drafted and key decision makers are sensitized about the NP.	Strategy outlining key steps for the accession to the NP is finalize and validated by all relevant stakeholders, disaggregated equitability by gender	100%	The University of the Bahamas served as the lead collaborating institution for the realization of the strategy via gender-sensitive consultative process with government agencies, the scientific community, NGOs, the private sector and local beneficiary communities. The strategy yielded the definition of the modalities for addressing ABS; particularly how the permitting process would work and how to enforce ABS policies and procedures in line with the passed ABS Act.	HS
	Increased awareness on the Nagoya Protocol among the key decision makers directly involved in the accession process.	Low level of awareness among decision makers	Key decision makers are sensitized	Key decision makers are sensitized	100%	Project has attained high visibility at senior policy level	HS
	Accession related documents are finalized	Accession process has not been initiated	All relevant documents (including analysis of	All relevant documents for accession are finalized and	100%	The country has acceded to the Nagoya Protocol based on the documentation generated by the project	HS

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
			implications for accession and other legal documents) needed for accession are drafted	submitted to the authorities.			
2.1: Increased understanding of the national benefits to be accrued through ABS	Awareness of international and national ABS strengthened	Very low level of awareness about the Nagoya Protocol and its implications among most stakeholders	Awareness strategy for ABS implementation and potential benefit is designed and first consultations are launched	At least 80% of researchers, local communities, relevant industry players (balanced by gender) targeted by the campaigns and consultations are aware of and understand the national ABS law and regulations as well as the CBD and NP provisions	100%	2 workshops/Trainings are accomplished / conducted on May 27, 2022 led by the University of The Bahamas. 1. Briefing session with the government officials about the Nagoya Protocol; 2. Meeting with the law makers re: Status of The Bahamas Accession to the Nagoya Protocol	5

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period(numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
				related to ABS and Traditional Knowledge (TK).			
2.2: National ABS Legal Framework adopted	National law and implementing regulations on ABS are prepared for adoption	No legislative, administrative and policy measures on ABS in place	National laws and implementing regulations are drafted	National laws are finalized and ready to be submitted for adoption to relevant authorities	100%	ABS Act 2021 or “The Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Protection and Sustainable Use Act” passed on February 18, 2021. Over the years researchers have been harvesting genetic resources for both commercial and non-commercial use. With regard to commercial enterprises, they have been used in crop protection, drug, development, chemicals, detergents, textiles and more. In the absence of a legal framework governing access, resources have been used in the development of products available in the commercial environment with no return, either monetary or non-monetary to the country from which the genetic resource was taken. With the passage of the “Biological Resources and Traditional Knowledge Protection and Sustainable Use Act” or the ABS Act 2021, the system generated a “legal-teeth” in providing clear guidelines on accessing and using resources for both the users	HS

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period(numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
						and the providers. Providers need to have the assurance that they will share in the benefits once the product leaves the country.	
2.3: Strengthened national capacity for implementation of the national ABS framework	One or more national competent authority identified, designated and capacitated to support the implementation of national law and regulations on ABS;	The is no designated and fully capacitated national competent authority on ABS	National Competent Authority designated and capacitated	National Competent Authority in place and operational	100%	The Competent National Authority is the Ministry of Environment, and the DEPP is the designated National Focal Point by virtue of the ABS Act 2021, under Part II – Re: Administration of the Act.	HS
	A well-functioning electronic system for ABS permits applications, administrations, monitoring and reporting is established.	Several government agencies issue different types of permits and there is no coordinated or centralized system for the issuance/ processing of permits.	Development of a one stop shop electronic permit system with input from all relevant sectoral agencies.	A single electronic permit system that makes it easy to apply for ABS related permits and that enables government authorities to effectively review and approve ABS related permit applications is in place and	100%	A well-functioning electronic system for ABS permits applications, administrations, monitoring and reporting has been established under the administration of the DEPP with oversight by a legally mandated national ABS Committee.	HS

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
				operational			
	Existence of mechanism for the protection of Traditional knowledge (TK) relating to genetic and biological resources	TK relating to genetic resources is not inventories nor protected	TK inventory is established	A system for protecting confidential and non-confidential TK is established	100%	The Mechanism is imbedded under the ABS Act 2021 with respect to the TK protection and Sustainable use.	HS
3.1 ABS principles applied to adjusted non-commercial research permits	Partnership with ex-situ collection established	Benefit Sharing is not for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	not defined	Partnership collaboration agreements established with 2-3 ex situ collections	100%	Partnership collaboration agreements with ex-situ collections have been ongoing with the Bahamas Antiquities, Monuments and Museum Corporation (AMMC) as the lead institution with designated responsibility for dealing with the ex-situ collectors.	S
	Adjusted ABS agreement to include monitoring	not defined	not defined	ABS agreements in place and signed by the government of the Bahamas and the commercial partner	100%	Through the establishment of the ABS Permitting system ABS agreements are now in place with research and commercial partners.	S

3.2 Rating of progress implementation towards delivery of outputs (Implementation Progress)

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
1 Component 1: National Strategy and accession to the Nagoya Protocol	Output 1.1.1: Access and Benefit Sharing Strategy for The Bahamas developed in a consultative process	2021-03-31	100%	100%	Completed	HS
	1.1.1.1. Conduct assessment on stakeholder roles and responsibilities in ABS, including stakeholder mapping and analysis	2019-09-31	100%	100%	completed	
	1.1.1.2. Conduct an ABS capacity needs assessment to define key ABS strategic orientations/ goals	2020-06-30	100%	100%		
	1.1.1.3. Undertake consultations through workshops (7-family Islands) to get input on the draft ABS Strategy	2021-03-31	100%	100%		
	Output 1.1.2 Awareness among decision and lawmakers on opportunities of the Nagoya Protocol is raised.	2021-06-30	100%	100%		HS
	1.1.2.1. Development of awareness and outreach materials on the Nagoya Protocol for decision makers (Cabinet, Parliament, Senate)	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	1.1.2.2. Sessions for government officials and decision makers / Organizing parliamentary briefings with key member of environmental related commission	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	Output 1.1.3 Legal documents needed for ratification /accession are drafted	2021-06-30	100%	100%		HS
	1.1.3.1. Undertaking a study on implications of accession, including cost benefit analysis and rationale	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	1.1.3.2. Development of a manual on accession the Protocol including templates for briefing documents for high government officials	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
2 National enabling environment for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol	Output 2.1.1. Consultations and public awareness campaigns with relevant stakeholders (including consultations and awareness raising to increase understanding of issues of intellectual property rights and traditional knowledge related to ABS	2021-06-30	100%	100%		HS
	2.1.1.1. Development of toolkits to raise awareness of government officials and other stakeholders on ABS	2020-12-30	100%	100%		
	2.1.1.2 Organization of workshops for government officials and other stakeholders on thematic issues of relevance to ABS implementation	2020-09-31	100%	100%		

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
	2.1.1.3. Organization of workshops for journalists and other media and communication experts on ABS	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	Output 2.2.1. Policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks governing ABS drafted and submitted for approval by legislature, inclusive of appointment of National Focal Point and Competent National Authority	2021-09-30	100%	100%		HS
	2.2.1.1. Undertaking a comprehensive analysis (including gap analysis) of laws/regulations of relevance to ABS	2020-09-31	100%	100%		
	2.2.1.2. Organization of training sessions among law makers/drafters on the Nagoya Protocol	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	2.2.1.3. Drafting of required legislation/ regulations	2020-09-31	100%	100%		
	2.2.1.4. Organization of consultative workshops to validate draft text before its official submission	2020-12-30	100%	100%		
	2.2.1.5. Organization of training workshops for relevant institutions (including the designated NCA on ABS and the Nagoya Protocol	2021-09-30	100%	100%		
	Output 2.3.1. (Online) administrative procedures for ABS Agreements with Prior Informed Consent [PIC], Mutually Agreed Terms [MAT], and Benefit Sharing approved and available for use. Monitoring system for research and bioprospecting permits, ABS Agreements developed and implemented.	2021-12-30	100%	100%		HS
	2.3.1.1. Develop a pilot permit system at an early stage (Year 1) accommodating the principles of agile development wherever possible	2021-03-31	100%	100%		
	2.3.1.2. Implement and continue the development of the system with regular periodic review by users	2022-12-31	100%	100%		
	2.3.1.3. Report on experience gained and future development plans and fine tune system (Year 2, Year 3)	2022-12-31	100%	100%		
	Output 2.3.2. Capacity built within competent authorities for initiating and negotiating contracts/agreements	2021-12-31	100%	100%		HS

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
	2.3.2.1. Development of explanatory notes on the different components of MAT and relevant actors	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	2.3.2.2. Organization of trainings and orientation programmes on negotiation of MAT, including modules on technical and legal aspects	2021-09-30	100%	100%		
	2.3.2.3. Orientation programme on IPR-related issues of MATs	2021-09-30	100%	100%		
	2.3.2.4. Development of an operational manual on MAT, covering, inter alia, how to negotiate MAT and the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors	2021-12-31	100%	100%		
3 Applied ABS arrangements in The Bahamas	Output 3.1.1. Pilot 1 - Adjusted ABS contracts/agreements for research permits to include monetary and on monetary benefit sharing provisions to ensure fair and equitable benefit sharing at any stage of research, development, innovation, pre-commercialization or commercialization	2021-06-30	100%	100%		HS
	3.1.1.1. Hands-on practical training for research host institutions in applying for access permits and testing the online application procedures to be developed under component 2	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	3.1.1.2. Conduct of KAP Survey – level of education and awareness survey on ABS	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	Output 3.1.2. Pilot 2. Adjusted partnerships with ex situ collections take up ABS policies					S
	3.1.2.1. Undertake study providing overview on Bahamian resources held in ex situ collection and analysis of existing ABS policies of ex-situ collections	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	3.1.2.2. Partnership dialogues with selected ex-situ collections to discuss ABS policy for new utilizations of Bahamian genetic resources	2021-06-30	100%	100%		
	Output 3.1.3. Pilot 3. ABS agreement integrates monitoring system for BD and sustainable use	2022-04-30	100%	100%		HS
	3.1.3.1. Development of a population model	2021-12-30	100%	100%		
	3.1.3.2. Development of a management plan	2022-04-30	100%	100%		

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
	3.1.3.3. Undertake model validation/ analysis	2022-04-30	100%	100%		
	3.1.3.4. Workshops to bring together Partners to negotiate on terms and condition of the Agreement	2023-12-30	80%	100%	2nd batch of training for the members of the ABS Committee, Desk Officers and some representatives of the research institutions on the contract agreement particularly focusing on the commercial and non commercial MAT	

The Task Manager will decide on the relevant level of disaggregation (i.e. either at the output or activity level).

4 Risks

4.1 Table A. Project management Risk

Please refer to the Risk Help Sheet for more details on rating

Risk Factor	EA Rating	TM Rating
1 Management structure - Roles and responsibilities	Low	Low
2 Governance structure - Oversight	Low	Low
3 Implementation schedule	Low	Low
4 Budget	Low	Low
5 Financial Management	Low	Low
6 Reporting	Low	Low
7 Capacity to deliver	Low	Low

If any of the risk factors is rated a Moderate or higher, please include it in Table B below

4.2 Table B. Risk-log

Implementation Status (Current PIR)

Insert ALL the risks identified either at CEO endorsement (inc. safeguards screening), previous/current PIRs, and MTRs. Use the last line to propose a suggested consolidated rating.

Risks	Risk affecting: Outcome / outputs	CEO ED	PIR 1	PIR 2	PIR 3	PIR 4	PIR 5	Current PIR	Δ	Justification
Uncertainty due to government shifts in priorities and policy changes. Political will to have regulatory and institutional arrangements /structures to effectively	Outcome 1-3	M	M		M	M	M	L	↓	NOTE: PIR5=2023; PIR4=2022; PIR3=2021; PIR2=2020; PIR1=2019

Risks	Risk affecting: Outcome / outputs	CEO ED	PIR 1	PIR 2	PIR 3	PIR 4	PIR 5	Current PIR	Δ	Justification
implement the Nagoya Protocol in the Bahamas Limited legal, political and institutional capacity. Risk of staff turnover. Limited institutional and community interest in ABS. Balancing threats to marine and terrestrial ecosystems with the benefits of a successfully implemented ABS policy and system										
Willingness among institutions to share knowledge and coordinate their activities to ensure the effectiveness of a centralized permitting mechanisms	All outcomes and Outputs	M	M	M	M	M	L	L	=	
Slow processes for adoption and promulgation of texts	Output 2.3.1	M	M	M	L	L	L	L	=	
Ex-situ collections in the US and in the EU refuse to change/adopt ABS policies due to the lack of domestic legal requirements to do so	Pilot 2 / Output 3.1.2	M	M	M	L	L	L	L	=	
		M	M	M	L	L	L	L	=	

4.3 Table C. Outstanding Moderate, Significant, and High risks

Additional mitigation measures for the next periods

Risk	Actions decided during the previous reporting instance (PIRt-1, MTR, etc.)	Actions effectively undertaken this reporting period	What	When	By Whom
Uncertainty due to government shifts in	The DEPP Continue to be the National Focal Point for	Continued system enhancements as well as	Continued legal guidance on matters pertaining to PIC	support to adapt to political/policy shifts will be	DEPP

Risk	Actions decided during the previous reporting instance (PIRt-1, MTR, etc.)	Actions effectively undertaken this reporting period	What	When	By Whom
<p>priorities and policy changes. Political will to have regulatory and institutional arrangements /structures to effectively implement the Nagoya Protocol in the Bahamas</p>	<p>the Nagoya Protocol and the Ministry of Environment is the National Competent Authority as being represented by the Ministry's permanent Secretary and the DEPP Director.</p>	<p>sustained legal advice provided guidance in both the operationalization of the ABS portal as well as the effective enforcement of the ABS Act</p>	<p>and MAT. and the IPR Institutionalization of the ABS portal as a regular program of the government - by hiring and training employees to oversee and manage the administration of the system and having an in house IT system to technically maintain the functionality of the permitting portal. Sustained enhancement and maintenance of the ABS online permitting portal Continued coordination / strengthened partnership with the members of the ABS Committee Lobbying for government support onward full institutionalization of ABS initiatives Periodic briefing / updating sessions be conducted for both the members of the Cabinet and the Senate Encourage greater participation from</p>	<p>on-going post-project</p>	

Risk	Actions decided during the previous reporting instance (PIRt-1, MTR, etc.)	Actions effectively undertaken this reporting period	What	When	By Whom
			key leaders who will be considered champions in the development of useful mechanisms for sustainability		
<p>Limited legal, political and institutional capacity.</p> <p>Limited institutional and community interest in ABS.</p> <p>Balancing threats to marine and terrestrial ecosystems with the benefits of a successfully implemented ABS policy and system</p>	<p>The recommendation to do an amendment or develop an statutory instrument of the ABS Act of 2021 is already within the discretion of the members of the ABS Committee but led by the DEPP through the Ministry of The Environment. The recommendation is still pending following the stipulated provision that a preferential amendment shall be done after 3 years of the ABS execution.</p>	<p>Meeting and briefing sessions - DEPP is being represented by the Director and issues pertaining to the ABS Act and the permitting portal is appropriately being addressed by the Minister and the Director. The sustainability of the ABS initiatives are gradually manifesting through the present management and leadership of the DEPP. The management of the ABS Project is now being transitioned into a national leadership led by DEPP as part of the institutionalization process.</p>	<p>The institutionalization of the ABS system by the government of The Bahamas is a continuing process. Their initiative to allocate funding support for the sustainability of the system was quite remarkable to note.</p>	<p>support to adapt to capacity limitations will continue post-project</p>	<p>DEPP / Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources</p>

High Risk (H): There is a probability of greater than 75% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face high risks. Significant Risk (S): There is a probability of between 51% and 75% that assumptions may fail to hold and/or the project may face substantial risks. Moderate Risk (M): There is a probability of between 26% and 50% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only modest risks. Low Risk (L): There is a probability of up to 25% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only modest risks.



5 Amendment - GeoSpatial

Project Minor Amendments

Minor amendments are changes to the project design or implementation that do not have significant impact on the project objectives or scope, or an increase of the GEF project financing up to 5% as described in Annex 9 of the Project and Program Cycle Policy Guidelines. Please tick each category for which a change occurred in the fiscal year of reporting and provide a description of the change that occurred in the textbox. You may attach supporting document as appropriate

5.1 Table A: Listing of all Minor Amendment (TM)

Minor Amendments	Changes
Results Framework:	No
Components and Cost:	No
Institutional and implementation arrangements:	No
Financial Management:	No
Implementation Schedule:	
Executing Entity:	No
Executing Entity Category:	No
Minor project objective change:	No
Safeguards:	No
Risk analysis:	No
Increase of GEF financing up to 5%:	No
Location of project activity:	No
Other:	No

Minor amendments

To facilitate project no-cost extensions to address operational delays from initial start-up and those triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.2 Table B: History of project revisions and/or extensions (TM)

Version	Type	Signed/Approved by UNEP	Entry Into Force (last signature Date)	Agreement Expiry Date	Main changes introduced in this revision
Original Legal Instrument		2016-04-11	2016-05-06	2020-02-28	
Amendment 1	Extension	2019-10-16	2019-10-24	2023-02-23	Extended timeframe; COVID19 pandemic-related. No changes to project
Amendment 2	Extension	2022-07-14	2022-07-14	2024-04-30	Extended timeframe; continued fall-out from COVID19 pandemic-related delays. No changes to project

GEO Location Information:

The Location Name, Latitude and Longitude are required fields insofar as an Agency chooses to enter a project location under the set format. The Geo Name ID is required in instances where the location is not exact, such as in the case of a city, as opposed to the exact site of a physical infrastructure. The Location & Activity Description fields are optional. Project longitude and latitude must follow the Decimal Degrees WGS84 format and Agencies are encouraged to use at least four decimal points for greater accuracy. Users may add as many locations as appropriate. Web mapping applications such as OpenStreetMap or GeoNames use this format. Consider using a conversion tool as needed, such as: <https://coordinates-converter.com> Please see the Geocoding User Guide by clicking here

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GEO Name ID	Location Description	Activity Description
Cross Harbor Point South Abaco	25.91948	-77.28442	3572558	this is the location where the pilot 3 harvest field experiment occurred	This is where the component 3 activities were implemented and analyzed. and considered to have the biggest concentration of sea whip. map generated from the report submitted by the Perry Institute of management who is in

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GEO Name ID	Location Description	Activity Description
					charge in the implementation of Component 3.

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions is taking place as appropriate. *

File copy of the map is uploaded in Step 5

[Annex any linked geospatial file]

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